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The 1986 Survey of Dental Practice

General Characteristics of Dentists

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GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF DENTISTS
FOR THE YEAR OF 1985

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HIGHLIGHTS

Eighteen percent of all private practitioners are under the age of 35; roughly half (51.4%) are under the age of 45; while 8.6% are 65 years of age or older.

Over half (58.8%) of the practitioners graduated from dental school since 1965, 31.2% graduated from dental school since 1975, and 10.6% graduated since 1980.

The solo dentist practice is the most typical size of private practice, 68.4%.

The mean age of all private practitioners is 44 years; for dentists graduating since 1980, 30 years.

The majority of the nation's private practitioners practice dentistry on a full-time basis.

Almost half of nonowner dentists, 47.5%, graduated from dental school since 1980. Roughly 72% have graduated since 1975, while 28.1% graduated before 1975.

INTRODUCTION

This report provides descriptive statistics from the 1986 Survey of Dental Practice on the general characteristics of private practitioners in the United States for the year 1985. Some of the areas summarized are age, region (U.S. census), and graduation year distributions. Certain statistics pertaining to the size of the dental practice and hours spent in the practice on a weekly and yearly basis are also reported.

Tables are presented separately for all dentists (private practitioners), independent (owner) dentists, solo dentists, employed dentists, and dentists graduating since 1980. Each section is preceded by a brief summary citing statistics on all responding dentists in a given category. The tables present detailed data broken down by general practitioner and specialist status for each of the five categories.

All Dentists

Of all private practitioners, 18% are under the age of 35. Roughly half (51.4%) are under the age of 45, while 8.6% are 65 years of age of older.

Of the nine U.S. census regions, the higher concentration of private practitioners occurs in the Middle Atlantic and the South Atlantic (16.3% and 19.1%), while the lowest concentration seems to occur in the West North Cental and the Mountain regions (5.3% and 5.8%).

Over half (58.8%) of private practitioners graduated from dental school since 1965, while only 10.6% graduated from dental school since 1980.

The most typical size of private practice is the solo practice, with 68.4% of the private practitioners working with no other dentist.

Approximately 13% of the private practitioners work in a practice with two or more other dentists.

The mean age of all private practitioners is 44 years. For male practitioners, who comprise 97.4% of all private practitioners, the mean age is 45 years; while female practitioners', representing only 2.7% of all practitioners, mean age is 35 years.

Private practitioners spend, on average, 42.33 hours per week in the practice, 32.8 of which are spent treating patients. The average number of weeks worked per year is 47.29. On an annual basis, 2,010.76 hours are spent in the practice while 1,558.98 hours are spent treating patients (about 77.5%).

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF DENTISTS ALL DENTISTS

ALL DENTISTS
DENTIST AGE, REGION, AND GRADUATION YEAR DISTRIBUTION

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL	
	WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
AGE GROUP						
LESS THAN 30 YEARS	73	4.0	0	0	73	3.4
30-34 YEARS	300	16.3	15	4.6	315	14.6
35-39 YEARS	340	18.5	52	16.3	392	18.2
40-44 YEARS	258	14.0	71	22.0	328	15.2
45-49 YEARS	180	9.8	48	15.0	229	10.6
50-54 YEARS	167	9.1	50	15.6	217	10.0
55-59 YEARS	193	10.5	36	11.2	229	10.6
60-64 YEARS	168	9.1	22	7.0	190	8.8
65 YEARS AND OLDER	159	8.6	26	8.3	185	8.6
REGION						
NEW ENGLAND	116	6.3	20	6.2	136	6.3
MIDDLE ATLANTIC	291	15.8	60	18.7	351	16.3
SOUTH ATLANTIC	355	19.3	58	18.0	412	19.1
EAST SOUTH CENTRAL	154	8.4	21	6.6	175	8.1
EAST NORTH CENTRAL	282	15.3	45	13.9	327	15.1
WEST NORTH CENTRAL	103	5.6	12	3.7	114	5.3
WEST SOUTH CENTRAL	137	7.5	36	11.4	173	8.0
MOUNTAIN	106	5.8	19	6.1	126	5.8
PACIFIC	293	16.0	49	15.4	343	15.9
GRADUATION YEAR						
BEFORE 1965	736	40.1	154	48.1	890	41.3
1965-1974	471	25.7	124	38.5	595	27.6
1975-1980	406	22.1	39	12.1	445	20.6
SINCE 1980	224	12.2	4	1.3	228	10.6
ALL	1837	100.0	321	100.0	2157	100.0

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1986 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF DENTISTS — ALL DENTISTS

ALL DENTISTS
SIZE OF PRIVATE PRACTICE

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL	
	WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
PRACTICE SIZE						
NO OTHER DENTISTS (SOLO)	1276	69.1	208	64.4	1484	68.4
ONE OTHER DENTIST	339	18.3	63	19.5	402	18.5
TWO OR MORE OTHER DENTISTS	233	12.6	52	16.2	285	13.1
ALL	1847	100.0	324	100.0	2171	100.0

ALL DENTISTS
MEAN AND MEDIAN AGE BY GENDER AND DENTIST TYPE

	TYPE OF DENTIST											
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER				SPECIALIST				ALL-WEIGHTED			
	AGE				AGE				AGE			
	MEAN	MEDIAN	GENDER PERCENT	N	MEAN	MEDIAN	GENDER PERCENT	N	MEAN	MEDIAN	GENDER PERCENT	N
GENDER												
MALE	46.6	44	97.0	1546	48.3	47	98.0	538	46.9	45	97.0	2174
FEMALE	35	33	3.0	45	44.8	40	2.0	12	36.2	35	3.0	57
ALL-WEIGHTED	46.3	43	100.0	1591	48.3	47	100.0	550	46.6	44	100.0	2141

ALL DENTISTS
MEAN HOURS SPENT IN PRACTICE

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL-WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
WEEKS PER YEAR SPENT IN DENTAL OFFICE	47.42	1619	46.56	550	47.23	2169
HOURS PER WEEK SPENT IN DENTAL OFFICE	42.46	1619	41.58	550	42.33	2169
HOURS PER YEAR SPENT IN DENTAL OFFICE	2022.55	1619	1943.44	550	2010.76	2169
HOURS PER WEEK TREATING PATIENTS	33.05	1619	31.40	550	32.80	2169
HOURS PER YEAR TREATING PATIENTS	1574.88	1619	1468.20	550	1556.98	2169

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1986 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

Independent Dentists

Of all independent dentists, 15.7% are under the age of 35. Half (50%) are under the age of 45, while 8.7% are 65 years of age of older.

Over half (57.7%) of independent practitioners graduated from dental school since 1965, while only 8.4% graduated from dental school since 1980.

Among independents, the most typical size of private practice is the solo practice, with 72.2% of the private practitioners working with no other dentist. About 11% of independent dentists work in a practice with two or more dentists.

The mean age of all independent practitioners is 45 years. For male practitioners, who comprise 97.4% of independent practitioners, the mean age is 46 years; while female practitioners', representing only 2.7% of all practitioners, mean age is 35.5 years.

Independent practitioners spend, on average, 42.55 hours per week in the practice, 32.99 of which are spent treating patients. The average number of weeks worked per year is 47.38. On an annual basis, 2,024.29 hours are spent in the practice while 1,570 hours are spent treating patients (about 77.6%).

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS
DENTIST AGE, REGION, AND GRADUATION YEAR DISTRIBUTION

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL	
	WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
AGE GROUP						
LESS THAN 30 YEARS	44	2.6	0	0	44	2.2
30-34 YEARS	262	15.2	12	3.8	274	13.5
35-39 YEARS	326	19.0	49	15.9	376	18.5
40-44 YEARS	251	14.6	70	22.5	321	15.8
45-49 YEARS	177	10.3	46	15.0	223	11.0
50-54 YEARS	164	9.5	50	16.1	214	10.5
55-59 YEARS	186	10.8	36	11.6	222	10.9
60-64 YEARS	159	9.2	22	7.0	180	8.9
65 YEARS AND OLDER	152	8.8	25	8.1	177	8.7
REGION						
NEW ENGLAND	106	6.2	19	6.1	125	6.1
MIDDLE ATLANTIC	269	15.6	58	18.8	327	16.1
SOUTH ATLANTIC	338	19.6	56	18.2	394	19.4
EAST SOUTH CENTRAL	146	8.5	21	6.6	167	8.2
EAST NORTH CENTRAL	266	15.4	42	13.4	308	15.1
WEST NORTH CENTRAL	100	5.8	12	3.8	112	5.5
WEST SOUTH CENTRAL	129	7.5	36	11.7	165	8.1
MOUNTAIN	99	5.8	19	6.1	118	5.8
PACIFIC	268	15.6	48	15.3	316	15.5
GRADUATION YEAR						
BEFORE 1965	710	41.2	152	48.9	861	42.4
1965-1974	464	27.0	121	38.8	585	28.8
1975-1980	379	22.0	37	11.9	416	20.5
SINCE 1980	169	9.8	1	0.4	170	8.4
ALL	1722	100.0	311	100.0	2032	100.0

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1986 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF DENTISTS — INDEPENDENT DENTISTS

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS
SIZE OF PRIVATE PRACTICE

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL	
	WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
PRACTICE SIZE						
NO OTHER DENTISTS (SOLO)	1269	73.3	208	65.2	1476	72.2
ONE OTHER DENTIST	288	16.6	59	18.9	347	17.3
TWO OR MORE OTHER DENTISTS	176	10.1	46	14.8	222	10.9
ALL	1732	100.0	314	100.0	2045	100.0

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS
MEAN AND MEDIAN AGE BY GENDER AND DENTIST TYPE

	TYPE OF DENTIST											
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER				SPECIALIST				ALL-WEIGHTED			
	AGE				AGE				AGE			
	MEAN	MEDIAN	GENDER PERCENT	N	MEAN	MEDIAN	GENDER PERCENT	N	MEAN	MEDIAN	GENDER PERCENT	N
GENDER												
MALE	46.6	45	97.4	1546	48.3	47	98.5	536	46.9	46	97.8	2136
FEMALE	35	34	3.1	45	44.8	40	2.0	12	36.2	35.5	3.2	57
ALL-WEIGHTED	46.3	44	100.0	1591	48.3	47	100.0	550	46.6	45	100.0	2141

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS
MEAN HOURS SPENT IN PRACTICE

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL-WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
WEEKS PER YEAR SPENT IN DENTAL OFFICE	47.57	1516	44.59	533	47.34	2791
HOURS PER WEEK SPENT IN DENTAL OFFICE	42.75	1518	41.45	533	42.59	2801
HOURS PER YEAR SPENT IN DENTAL OFFICE	2039.79	1518	1939.72	533	2024.29	2051
HOURS PER WEEK TREATING PATIENTS	33.30	1518	31.26	533	32.99	2051
HOURS PER YEAR TREATING PATIENTS	1569.46	1514	1462.49	533	1570.00	2047

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1986 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

Solo Dentists

Most dentists (68.4%) are solo practitioners. Of all solo dentists, 15.4% are under the age of 35. Almost half (48.5%) are under the age of 45, while 9.6% are 65 years of age of older.

Over half (56.5%) of all solo practitioners graduated from dental school since 1965, while 7.8% graduated from dental school since 1980.

The mean age of all solo practitioners is 46 years. For male practitioners, who comprise 97.2% of solo practitioners, the mean age is 46 years; for female practitioners, who represent 2.0% of all solo practitioners, the mean age is 37 years.

Solo practitioners spend, on average, 42.48 hours per week in the practice, 32.83 of which are spent treating patients. The average number of weeks worked per year is 47.39. On an annual basis, 2,021.10 hours are spent in the practice while 1,562.74 hours are spent treating patients (about 77.3%).

SOLO DENTISTS
DENTIST AGE, REGION, AND GRADUATION YEAR DISTRIBUTION

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL	
	WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED		WEIGHTED	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
AGE GROUP						
LESS THAN 30 YEARS	26	2.1	0	0	26	1.8
30-34 YEARS	191	15.2	8	3.8	198	13.6
35-39 YEARS	234	18.7	35	17.3	269	18.5
40-44 YEARS	167	13.3	45	22.5	212	14.6
45-49 YEARS	131	10.5	31	15.5	162	11.2
50-54 YEARS	124	9.9	32	15.8	156	10.7
55-59 YEARS	130	10.4	22	11.1	152	10.5
60-64 YEARS	126	10.0	12	5.8	137	9.4
65 YEARS AND OLDER	123	9.8	16	8.2	140	9.6
REGION						
NEW ENGLAND	75	6.0	10	5.0	85	5.9
MIDDLE ATLANTIC	191	15.2	31	15.5	222	15.3
SOUTH ATLANTIC	245	19.6	35	17.5	281	19.3
EAST SOUTH CENTRAL	108	8.7	11	5.3	119	8.2
EAST NORTH CENTRAL	179	14.3	31	15.2	210	14.4
WEST NORTH CENTRAL	74	5.9	9	4.7	84	5.8
WEST SOUTH CENTRAL	100	8.0	28	14.0	129	8.9
MOUNTAIN	80	6.4	14	7.0	94	6.5
PACIFIC	199	15.9	32	15.8	230	15.9
GRADUATION YEAR						
BEFORE 1965	537	42.9	95	47.1	632	43.5
1965-1974	327	26.2	81	40.4	409	28.1
1975-1980	274	21.9	25	12.6	299	20.6
SINCE 1980	113	9.0	0	0	113	7.8
ALL	1252	100.0	201	100.0	1453	100.0

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1986 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE